

Deliverance

A play about Joan of Arc in two acts

By

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Characters

(In order of appearance)

Robert de Baudricourt

Jean de Metz

Bertrand de Poulengy (aka Pollichon)

Joan

Melisende, Baudricourt's wife

Maree, Baudricourt's daughter

Guard, at Vaucouleurs

Isabelle, maid

Dauphin

Page

Charles de Poitiers

Archbishop of Reims

La Tremoille, Grand Chamberlain

Madame La Tremoille

Courtier 1

Courtier 2

Courtier 3

Noblewoman 1

Noblewoman 2

La Hire

Comte de Vendome

Duc d'Alencon, a French Commander

Abbot

William Aymery

Friar Seguin

Stephen, a soldier

James, a soldier

Martin, a soldier

Dunois, a French Commander

Guillaume de Gamaches, a French Officer

Jean D'Aulon

Deliverance

Act One

Scene 1 A Chamber in Robert de Baudricourt's fortress in Vaucouleurs, France

Images of an interior fortress wall, with tapestries and decorative shields are projected on the scrim curtaining which hangs R to L in front of the white screen permanently affixed to the back wall. The space between the wall and the scrim must be completely unlit for this scene.

The only items of furniture are a table and chair DR at an angle facing DC.

Baudricourt enters R belligerently, followed by Jean de Metz.

Baudricourt: This is the third time she's been here. I thought we were well rid of her.

He crosses DL hands on hips

Jean: I have the utmost faith in her sire.

Baudricourt: And I've the utmost faith in my wife (*He sighs deeply without turning to Jean*) D'you think she could inspire an army and lead it into battle?

Jean: Your wife?

Baudricourt is taken aback

Baudricourt: What? (*He turns to him and laughs*) Heavens no! I meant the girl!

Jean: (*Quickly in order to hide his embarrassment*) Joan has certainly convinced me.

Baudricourt: So you're really taken with this girl?

Jean: What do you mean?

Baudricourt: You're obviously smitten by her!

Jean: Indeed I am, but not in the manner you seem to imply. She's smitten by God and I'm smitten by her faith in him.

Baudricourt laughs incredulously.

Baudricourt: Oh dear, oh dear!

Bertrand enters R

Baudricourt: Ah Pollichon, what've you to say about this child who has the nerve to call upon me again?

Bertrand: She's most eager to see you sire.

Baudricourt: I know that, but what more can I say to her?

Bertrand: Surely you recall her prediction at your previous meeting?

Baudricourt: Oh yes. Something about a battle near Orleans wasn't it? She told me the English would rout our forces. She was certainly convincing, but not surprisingly so; our armies are generally thrashed by the English.

Bertrand: Have you not heard about the latest battle?

Baudricourt: I've heard nothing.

Bertrand: It was a disaster! We outnumbered the English. We even had the Scots on our side, but what did we do? We retreated! We had an opportunity of defeating them, but we didn't have the stomach to press on!

Baudricourt: Another embarrassment, damn them! Where was this battle?

Jean: At Rouvray.

Baudricourt: Rouvray, north of Orleans?

Jean: Why, yes.

Baudricourt: God in heaven!

He moves DC rubbing the back of his neck

Baudricourt: For a moment I felt the hairs on my neck stand on end. (*Turning to them*) You're right Pollichon it's exactly as she predicted; she made it absolutely clear that it would occur at Rouvray! Perhaps it's coincidence, I don't know. When did you receive this news?

Jean: Only this morning sire.

Baudricourt: This morning? Huh! That's not surprising; I'm always the last to be told.

Jean: She also predicted the date of the battle!

Bertrand: Yes, the 12th of February, a week ago.

Jean: She was emphatic about it.

Baudricourt: Yes, yes, indeed she was! (*He considers the situation while rubbing his chin*). She's complicated my thinking. The English hold Paris and Rouen and if they secure Orleans, which at present appears to be a foregone conclusion, France will fall to them. (*Sighing deeply again*) Yes, I'll see her for what it's worth.

Jean: You don't know how much that pleases us.

Melisende enters DR

Melisende: (*incredulously*) Robert, the girl from Domremy – she's back.

Baudricourt scratches his head

Baudricourt: You've nothing to be concerned about my dear.

Melisende: But her presence disrupts the running of the household. She engages the servants and the soldiers in conversation, which is highly irregular.

Baudricourt: My dear, I'll speak with her very soon.

Melisende: Speak with her? Why waste more time on the child? She's a menace. I'd have her put to the sword.

Jean shakes his head in disgust. Bertrand turns away.

Baudricourt: Put to the sword? How could you possibly expect me to do that? What do you think I am a butcher?

Melisende: (*noticing Bertrand*) Ah Pollichon. I hope you can talk sense into my husband.

Bertrand: (*concerned*) I don't think that'll be necessary M'Lady. Your husband is certainly not inclined to butchery.

Melisende: (*sarcastically*) Oh dear what have I said? (*Sighing and addressing Baudricourt*) So what will you do with her?

Baudricourt: (*firmly*) I said I shall deal with her.

Melisende: You realise of course, we haven't had breakfast yet. Breakfast always puts you in better humour.

Baudricourt: (*quietly seething*) Just go Melisende.

Melisende: There, I'm right. You are in a foul mood. I'm sure these young men will join us.

Baudricourt: Not yet, we have business to attend to.

Melisende: Huh! Very well, I shall eat alone, as I often do these days.

Baudricourt: (*Dismissively*) Yes, yes, why not.

She exits DR in a huff. Baudricourt shakes his head

Jean: Are you ready to see her now sire?

Baudricourt: Yes, but before I do I want to make it absolutely clear I shall not consider any new requests from her.

Jean: Of course, sire.

Jean smiles, bows and exits R quickly.

Bertrand: Thank you sire.

Baudricourt: Don't thank me Pollichon, not yet at any rate. Before you go wandering off to Chinon, don't forget you'd have Maree to pacify.

Bertrand: I haven't forgotten, but she'll understand.

Baudricourt: Don't you be so sure. She's like her mother, tenacity flows in her blood.

Bertrand: Much as I love Maree, I'm devoted to Joan and her cause.

Baudricourt: I strongly suggest you choose your words carefully when you face her.

Bertrand: She has nothing to fear sire.

Baudricourt: I don't think she'll be fearful, but you might be.

Jean enters R followed by Joan who almost knocks Jean to the ground as she pushes past him and throws herself in front of Baudricourt and kisses his hands.

Joan: I knew you would see reason sire. *(she looks up at him)* When can I leave? Will you provide a horse and armour? I must have armour; the men will expect me to wear it if I'm to lead them into battle. And a sword!

Baudricourt: What! *(He moves away)* Explain to me how you could possibly lead an army into battle.

Joan: *(rising to her feet)* I'm not made to follow the career of a soldier; but I must go and carry out my calling, for my Lord has appointed me to do so. The Dauphin's army lacks a soul and a purpose. As I told you when last we met, God has commanded me to motivate and lead the Dauphin's men into battle at Orleans and beyond.

Baudricourt: Aren't you assuming too much? Do you really think the Dauphin would agree to such a cause?

Joan: Yes, I'm sure he'll welcome me. As I told you on my last visit I shall see he's crowned King of France at Reims.

Baudricourt scratches his head and turns away from the others. He sighs heavily and turns back to Joan.

Baudricourt: Well, you appear to have convinced these two.

Joan: And you I hope.

Baudricourt: Yes... well, I must say I admire your passion for your cause, if it should be called that.

Joan falls in front of him again and takes his hand. She looks up at him.

Joan: I want you to understand that it's God's will. My passion is to carry out his command, *(she stands and looks at him intently)* to the end.

Jean: With the help of others here in Vaucouleurs I have found you a horse.

Baudricourt is flabbergasted

Baudricourt: You've got her a horse, for her?

Joan: *(she smiles)* I hope it's a good one!

Jean: It will get you to Chinon.

Baudricourt: You don't waste time do you?

Joan: A great deal of it's been wasted sire. Is it your intention to help me carry out God's work?

Baudricourt: You appear to have a great deal of support and I suppose I must honour my promise to assist you now that your prediction about the battle at Rouvray has come true.

Joan: You're a good man. God will bless you. My saints will keep you safe. There're not many men in your position who would honour promises.

Baudricourt: Your saints? The ones who supposedly speak to you?

Joan: No!

Baudricourt: What! (*Laughs*) Have they stopped speaking to you?

Joan: They do not supposedly speak to me sire – St. Michael, St. Catherine and St. Margaret speak to me most clearly every day! They urge me to see the Dauphin, to lead an army and do my utmost to ensure the English are driven from our shores.

Baudricourt: What an amazing young woman, Pollichon! You know, she may well inspire our men!

Bertrand: (*quickly*) Sire there is the matter of a letter from you, addressed to the Dauphin.

Baudricourt laughs a little incredulously

Baudricourt: Oh yes, the letter.

Joan: It's not a laughing matter sire. I must have a letter of introduction to the Dauphin in which you must say you support me with my intentions and my proposal that he should be crowned at Reims as King of all France. And you must support your words with careful reasoning.

Baudricourt: God in Heaven! Why don't you write the letter and I'll sign it for you!

Joan: I would if I could sire.

Baudricourt: Well, that's something you can't do.

Jean: (*quickly*) Sire, would you also mention that Pollichon and I are her escorts and we shall offer our support in any conflict.

Baudricourt: What! Do you intend to stay in Chinon?

Jean: We shall assist Joan no matter where she may be needed.

Baudricourt turns directly to Bertrand.

Baudricourt: And Maree? What about her?

Bertrand: It'll be a test of our love for each other.

Joan: It shall be a test for us all.

Baudricourt: My word, your faith in her is deeper than I thought. When do you intend leaving?

Bertrand: As soon as possible.

Joan: Is today a probability?

Bertrand: Have patience Joan.

Joan: Patience? Don't you think I've been patient? This is my third visit!

Baudricourt: Be careful young lady, don't chance your arm; now the letter, for that you'll have to wait. I have to give great thought to the words I use.

Joan: It's a pity you hadn't considered them since we last met.

Baudricourt reacts by glaring at her and as he is about to respond, but Jean interjects

Jean: (*quickly*) Joan is keen to begin her quest.

Joan: (*fervently*) Quest? It's not a quest. I do not seek adventure!

Jean: (*firmly*) Joan! You are becoming loud and arrogant.

Joan: Oh, I apologise, that wasn't my intention. If I gave that impression I shall ask God for his forgiveness.

Baudricourt: Leave me while I consider the wording of my missive. Jean, ask one of my servants to bring pen and ink.

Joan: Thank you sire.

Baudricourt: Pollichon I want you to stay, you might be able to assist me in my writing task (*to Joan*) and as for you young woman, any more outbursts and you'll leave with nothing.

Joan: Please, you must understand that I'm in earnest to carry out God's commands. I sincerely thank you for your help good sire. God will not forget you.

Baudricourt: Yes, yes, perhaps, but be warned you ride a very narrow track young woman. Now leave.

Joan: Of course, and thank you again.

Joan and Jean exit UR

Baudricourt: Why is it that those who have been touched by God, or ardently worship him, seem so intense, often unhappy?

Maree enters DR

Bertrand: Maree.

She ignores him

Maree: What's happening father?

Baudricourt: I'm about to write a letter to the Dauphin my dear.

Maree: *(disappointed)* Oh. So you've decided to support the maid.

Baudricourt: Yes, the letter is the last of my favours.

Maree: *(Sarcastically)* A seal of approval?

Baudricourt: Yes, I suppose it is.

A Guard enters UR. The guard is carrying a writing case and a small sheet of parchment. Maree crosses L with her back to Bertrand.

Guard: Your writing implements my Lord.

Baudricourt waves a hand at the table and the Guard bows and places the writing case and parchment on it.

Guard: Will there be anything else my Lord?

Baudricourt: No, leave us.

The Guard bows and exits UR

Maree: Then your mind is made up?

Baudricourt: What? (*Realising that she is addressing Bertrand*) Oh, yes, I believe Pollichon has some explaining to do.

He sits at desk and spreads parchment.

Bertrand: Maree, I feel I must go to Chinon.

Maree: You *feel* you must? (*Turning to him*) You appear to feel nothing, clearly nothing for me.

Baudricourt: I cannot possibly write this letter in this atmosphere. Would you please leave?

Melisende enters UR

Melisende: That girl, she has an audience of men. They seem to find her intriguing! Of course they would wouldn't they? (*To Baudricourt*) You are sending this girl, Pollichon and Jean on a wild goose chase!

Bertrand: No my lady, it's nothing like that!

Baudricourt: Melisende, I applaud your concern. Pollichon, I want you to remember that apart from honouring my promise to the girl, she is the daughter of Jacques D'Arc, one of my tenant farmers, who is highly regarded in his community. I'm responsible for the girl's protection and as such you and Jean are my representatives and I expect you to consider likewise.

Melisende: Oh really!

Bertrand: Thank you sire, I am conversant with Joan's background and upbringing.

Maree: (*Sardonically*) Of course you are!

Melisende turns directly to Bertrand

Melisende: It seems as though the girl has bewitched you!

Bertrand crosses to Maree and takes her hands.

Bertrand: Please Maree, it's in the line of duty that I go with her, I assure you.

Maree pulls her hands away

Melisende: Duty? It's madness.

Baudricourt: Oh please be quiet Melisende.

Bertrand: It's difficult to explain. All I can say is that I admire her courage and her utmost faith in God.

Maree: And what will you do in your line of duty to protect her?

Bertrand: (*desperate to reassure her*) I shall do all I can, but I don't think of her in any other way. She's a child of God.

Melisende: I should hope we are all children of God.

Bertrand: Yes of course, but she is (*fighting for the right words*), she's been specially sent here by God.

Baudricourt: She's naïve.

Bertrand: Perhaps, but pure of spirit.

Maree: If she remains pure.

Bertrand: I'll see to it that she does. Jean and I will watch over her.

Maree: And where do I fit into the equation while you dutifully go away with another woman?

Bertrand: Please Maree. You mean so much to me. I adore you, surely you know that. Incredibly determined though she may be, Joan is a simple seventeen year old country girl who needs my protection.

Maree: Incredibly determined, simple? I'm totally confused by all your talk about the girl and if you'd rather spend time with a common maid....

She sobs quietly

Melisende: (*To the men*) Are you both satisfied?

Baudricourt: Melisende, you're making matters worse.

Bertrand tries to take Maree in his arms but she pushes him away

Melisende: You are both insensitive boars. Maree, will you come with me?

Maree shakes her head and waves dismissively at her.

Melisende: As you wish my dear, you know where to find me.

She looks at both men in disgust, sniffs loudly and exits UR

Baudricourt: This is going well isn't it? I hope you realise it's not only the English and the Burgundians the girl needs protection from, but also the hot bloodied men in your party, especially when you camp at night. If she falls into their hands, Heaven knows what will happen to her.

Bertrand: We've chosen five men who will accompany us. We trust them with our lives.

Baudricourt: And with her virginity I hope. Who are these men?

Bertrand: Colet de Vienne, accompanied by his squire, Richard l'Archer, and two men-at-arms.

Baudricourt: Well, you've chosen well. I commend you both.

Bertrand: Joan has made an impression on the guards and soldiers. They respect her and temper their language in her presence.

Baudricourt: *(scoffs)* Well that's a miracle!

Bertrand: We certainly need a miracle sire. I am convinced Joan will provide it or be instrumental in it. The Dauphin is totally incapable of managing his armies.

Baudricourt: Be careful Pollichon, walls have ears. Anyway, how often do miracles occur?

Bertrand: About once or twice in a lifetime they say.

Baudricourt: Who says? Why should France have the luxury of a miracle? Why should the Dauphin be blessed with one?

Bertrand: We may soon have the answers to your questions my Lord.

Baudricourt: Yes, well, *(to Maree)* shall you not join your mother?

Maree turns on them

Maree: *(furiously)* Mother's right! You're both insensitive boars!

Baudricourt: *(angrily)* Pollichon has made it absolutely clear. I support him and I expect you to do so! *(To Bertrand)* Come, we need the peace and privacy of my chapel to write this confounded letter.

He crosses to exit UR

Bertrand looks across at Maree pleadingly, before leaving. Maree turns her back on him.

Baudricourt: Pollichon, come on!

He exits UR behind Baudricourt

Maree falls into a chair and fights to control her sobbing.

Isabelle enters DR

Isabelle: My lady, your music tutor has arrived.

Maree: Tell him I've given my harp to the devil!

Isabelle: My lady?

Maree: Oh, just go!

Isabelle bows a bow and scurries off DR

Maree stands and pulls herself together as she crosses L

Jean enters UR and stops when he sees Maree.

Jean: My lady, I apologise, I expected to find your father.

Maree: *(without turning)* Well as you can see, he's not here. He's with Pollichon composing a letter.

Jean: Ah yes. May I be of some service? You appear most melancholy my Lady.

Maree: You're a master of understatement Captain de Metz. No, I need time alone to think.

Jean: Forgive me, but if I can help you in any way it would be my pleasure to.....

Maree: (*wearily interjecting*) Yes, yes, you are very kind, but please leave me.

Jean: Yes mademoiselle.

He bows and exits UR

She crosses DL and looks out into the audience as though she is inspecting herself in a full length mirror.

Isabelle, flustered, enters DR. Maree fusses with her dress in the mirror.

Maree: Well, did you get rid of him?

Isabelle: No my Lady, your mother insists you attend your lesson.

Maree: (*unmoved*) Then tell her I'm not available. I'm certainly not in the mood to create music. I shall not be tutored today.

Isabelle: But my Lady...

Maree: (*Firmly*) Did you not hear me!

Isabelle: Er, yes very clearly my Lady.

Isabelle scurries off DR.

Maree sighs heavily and slowly crosses UR

Joan enters DR

Joan: My Lady?

Maree: What now Isabelle?

Joan: My Lady I...

Maree turns to her

Maree: What... You! Who in Heaven's name allowed you access to this room?

Joan: The guards and a number of servants are all concerned about you my Lady.

Maree: They're not employed to be concerned for my feelings...

Joan interjects

Joan: They adore you my Lady and, of course, in a totally different way, Pollichon does.

Maree: Quite so, in a totally different way! Who gave you the right to call him by that name?

Joan: Well, he did.

Maree: Did he indeed?

Joan: I don't know what you mean by that remark my Lady, but it sounded like a response from a young girl who's completely lacking in confidence and trust.

Maree: How dare you!

Joan: I make no apology for my frankness. Without exception, the persons living and serving under this roof are most concerned about your welfare and your reaction to Polli...er, Captain de Poulengy, escorting me to Chinon. (*Maree's attempt to reply is waved aside as Joan continues*) My feelings for him are purely platonic. My love is of God, my saints and France. I have the full support of a fine body of men who will accompany me on my journey and I hope, as soon as your father completes the letter of introduction to our beloved Dauphin, we shall depart. I trust I've made the position very clear.

Maree looks at her open mouthed.

Joan: You do understand my Lady?

Maree: I...

Joan: (*Interjecting*) What I'm about to perform is ordained by God. The men and women in this household believe in me and I'm certain their faith in God's work shall never falter.

Maree sits heavily in a chair. Joan continues.

Joan: Please save your tears, we'll all shed many in the weeks and months ahead as we push to drive the English and their allies out of France. (*Smiling*) Believe me it shall be achieved.

Joan kneels beside Maree and takes her hands. At first Maree attempts to release herself, but Joan looks at her intently.

Joan: Trust in your dear Pollichon and believe in me for I've been sent here by God.

Maree is transfixed by Joan's stare as the lights go down slowly.

Scene 2: The Throne Room in Chinon Castle

Images of a large tapestry and a stone interior wall are projected onto the scrim from the front.

There is a decorative wooden throne UC. The rest of the stage is empty of furniture.

The Dauphin is sitting on the throne, one leg over an arm reading a letter. Jean stands slightly DL of him, waiting for his reaction.

The Dauphin runs a hand through his hair, sighs heavily and looks across at Jean.

Dauphin: It seems that Baudricourt's handwriting skills only just fall short of his skill as an army officer.

Jean: He's a brilliant commander your majesty.

Dauphin: That may be so but he hasn't been successful against the English lately has he?

Jean: He's only one man beside many your majesty.

The Dauphin laughs. He stands and crosses to C. Jean approaches him.

Dauphin: And yet you expect me to agree to a maid leading an army!

Jean looks down at his hands.

Dauphin: That was unfair. Baudricourt appears to believe in her and when we met on the last occasion you made a bold attempt to convince me of this miraculous maid's intentions.

Jean: Your majesty, I thought I'd convinced you!

Dauphin: I am very interested in her mission and I need to speak with her. Perhaps we all need to speak with her. The question is, will she be able to convince my advisers and the Church?

He crosses slowly DL

Jean: But you have power over all your subjects to accept her.

Dauphin: If only that were true.

The Page enters DR.

Page: Forgive me sire.

Dauphin: Yes, what is it?

Page: Your guests have arrived. The Lord Chamberlain requests an audience with you before you meet with them.

Dauphin: I really don't wish to keep my guests waiting while Monseigneur Tremoille gives me a sermon on how I must behave.

Page: What shall I say to his Lordship?

Dauphin: Oh just go away! Think of something!

Page: But sire, what exactly would you like me to say?

Dauphin: Tell him I shall meet with him later after the guests have left!

Page: As you wish.

Dauphin: Yes I do wish! Get out!

The Page bows and exits quickly DR

Dauphin: *(laughs)* Even the servants answer me back *(waving a hand at the departed Page)* and would you believe sometimes he refers to me as majesty. Lord I wish others would and maybe I would feel kingly!

Jean: They soon will, er, your majesty.

Dauphin: Don't you start calling me majesty, you will only confuse me.

Jean: When shall you see Joan?

Dauphin: The maid? I shall choose the right moment, Captain de Metz.

Lights down

End of Scene 2

Scene 3 – the same scene, later the same day

The throne room is busy. Jean and Bertrand stand DR talking to Charles de Poitiers.

The Dauphin is sitting on the throne UC. The Archbishop of Rheims and Monseigneur Tremoille stand slightly DL of the Dauphin. Madame Tremoille, Noblewoman 1 and Noblewoman 2, Courtier 1, Courtier 2 and Courtier 3 stand L of them. The women are fluttering fans about their faces.

Tremoille: *(to Dauphin)* I don't think it practical for you to see the girl, certainly not here.

Dauphin: I have here the letter from Baudricourt. Would you like to read it?

Tremoille: I can imagine its contents.

Dauphin: *(frustratingly and raising his voice)* Then I insist you do!

He rises and moves C. The others in the room stir; embarrassed by his outburst.

Tremoille: Give it to me.

Dauphin: Can I trust you to read it or will you tear it into pieces?

Tremoille: You really must control yourself as befits your position. You're bringing attention to yourself for the wrong reasons.

Dauphin: *(laughs)* I require your attention Lord Chamberlain, I'm the Dauphin for God's sake.

Tremoille: Ha, for his sake d'you think?

The Dauphin glares at him and thrusts the letter at The Archbishop, who calmly takes it

Dauphin: Read it. *(Quietly and angrily to Tremoille)* You are a bully sir.

Tremoille smiles smugly.

The Archbishop crosses R reading the letter.

Tremoille: Do you insist on giving the child an audience?

Dauphin: Captain de Metz, do you think I should see the girl?

Jean: You already have my opinion, er... sire.

Dauphin: And what do you think de Poulengy?

Bertrand: Yes, you must sire.

Tremoille: Must?

Bertrand ignores Tremoille and addresses the Dauphin assertively.

Bertrand: Your majesty, you should see her as soon as possible.

The Dauphin rubs his chin

Tremoille: *(sardonically)* Of course, you and de Metz brought her here, didn't you?

Archbishop: *(turning to Dauphin)* If you decide to grant the child an audience sire, I'd take care when considering her appeals. She may be a visionary.

Tremoille: Or a heretic.

Jean: *(a little heated, to Tremoille)* I can assure you she's not my lord.

Tremoille: *(turning away from him)* If we had time Captain I'd ask you to provide evidence in support of that assurance and I'd hope it would be based only on an unbiased faith in her.

Jean: I'm not sure what you mean my Lord.

Tremoille: Come now captain, you're a hot bloodied young man. Some would say that your respect for her virtue is not as pure as you make out.

Bertrand: They'd be entirely wrong in that thought my Lord.

Jean: (*Heatedly*) We believe in her absolutely! Her words inspire me with a love of God equivalent to her own. I believe she's been sent by God. I'd cause her no harm.

Bertrand: My Lord, Of course you may say that the opportunity of taking advantage of her was there not only for us, but for others in our party, but that situation or desire never entered our heads. With the greatest respect my Lord, that seed has just been planted in the minds of others, by you perhaps.

Tremoille: Remember whom you are addressing.

Dauphin: (*to Bertrand and Jean*) There, I told you he was a bully!

The others utter embarrassed laughter

Madame Tremoille: (*To the Dauphin*) My husband presses you to make decisions, but you find it so difficult to do so.

The Dauphin addresses Tremoille.

Dauphin: It is commendable that you have such a supportive wife my Lord. She's beginning to sound like you.

Madame Tremoille: How dare you sire! My husband has always had my support and shall continue to do so no matter what I sound like.

Dauphin: (*falsely*) Of course he shall Madame.

Jean: Each night, while we were not travelling she slept beside us. We lay side by side, the maid next to me and Bernard, with her upper and nether garments closely shut.

The Noblewomen titter and others laugh mildly

Bertrand: We felt such respect for her; we'd never dare make her an unseemly proposal. Most gentlemen in this room know that I intend marrying Robert de Baudricourt's daughter. I'd never harm my relationship with Maree de Baudricourt.

More mild laughter

Tremoille: (*sarcastically*) I congratulate you on your wholesome intentions Captain.

Archbishop: Enough of this (*to Jean and Bertrand*) You're not on trial, nobody here should attempt to judge you; I respect your proper feelings for the girl and so should you Lord Chamberlain.

Tremoille: I was merely voicing the opinions of others in our company.

Dauphin: No my Lord, you were attempting to brew more trouble by expressing your own opinions.

The Dauphin snatches the letter from The Archbishop, who groans in annoyance.

The Dauphin crosses DR and turns to those on stage, waving the letter at them.

Dauphin: This could be a letter on behalf of an angel of mercy. It must be considered very carefully.

Tremoille: Considered yes, but whether it should be acted upon is another matter!

Dauphin: Oh Monseigneur, you are such a stick in the Vienne River mud! You haven't read the letter.

The courtiers laugh mildly and Tremoille throws fierce glances at them.

Archbishop: Gentlemen please.

Dauphin: (*Teasingly*) I'm becoming so tired of being badgered by you Lord Chamberlain.

Tremoille: Until you pay your debts, especially those owing to me, and act as a suitable Dauphin, I shall continue to badger you! You must send the girl on her way! Get rid of her.

Archbishop: Please my Lord, I insist that you keep such remarks at bay.

Tremoille: Of course. I shall respect your wishes your eminence, but for the sake of France, please do not humiliate us with the acceptance of the maid.

Archbishop: I see no reason why we should not at least see and hear the girl.

Tremoille throws up his hands, shakes his head and moves DL. The Archbishop joins the Dauphin DR.

Madame Tremoille: Archbishop, surely you must accept that it would be a complete waste of time!

Archbishop: Maybe Madame, but Like God, I can move in mysterious ways.

Mild laughter from the others

(To Dauphin) I dare say it's your intention to see her in our presence?

Dauphin: Indeed your eminence, but I'd like to carry out a little experiment.

Archbishop: Nothing toxic, I hope

Dauphin: I've heard that the girl's saints will direct her to me. We have never met and I'd like to test her recognition of me.

Archbishop: Do you mean that you'll accept the girl if she actually recognises you?

Dauphin: I wouldn't go so far as to suggest that your eminence, *(smiling)* but it should be an interesting exercise, don't you think?

The Archbishop sighs loudly and shakes his head.

Tremoille: *(completely unimpressed)* Now we are to play party games!

The Dauphin laughs and a few others stifle their laughter as Tremoille glares at them.

Dauphin: Look at me, do I meet the fashionable qualities of a Dauphin.

Courtier 1: *(quietly to Noblewoman 1)* He's right nobody would recognize him as the Dauphin.

Dauphin: *(to Courtier 1)* Did you say something?

Courtier 1: Er, I said that I doubt whether she would recognize you sire.

Noblewoman 1 grins and hides behind her fluttering fan.

Dauphin: I want someone to take my place on the throne.

The Dauphin approaches his stage audience and points to Charles de Poitiers.

Ah, Charles de Poitiers, I want you to be the one to do it.

He approaches him and leads him to the throne.

Charles: Is this really necessary sire?

There is another ripple of laughter from the courtiers.

Courtier 2: You'd make a splendid Dauphin, Charles (*realizing his statement*) I'm sorry my lord, I did not mean to ...

The Dauphin raises his hand to silence him.

Dauphin: Please don't apologise, but remember this moment when next you plead for favours.

Courtier 2: Please forgive me sire I was far from meaning to be rude to you.

Dauphin: If I were the King I could imprison you for treason, yes?

Courtier 2 drops to his knees in front of the Dauphin

Courtier 2: I beg of you sire.

The Dauphin laughs loudly

Dauphin: (*Sardonically*) Such power do I possess! Get up!

Courtier 2 rises quickly

Tremoille: Oh really, must you continue with this charade?

Dauphin: Don't be tiresome Lord Chamberlain, I am enjoying myself!

He waves dismissively to Courtier 2 who bows and stands dejectedly with the others.

The Dauphin turns to Charles de Poitiers and places a hand on his shoulder

Dauphin: *(to the others at large)* I share the same name as he, do I not?

Courtier 3: Yes sire, but not your most renowned title. There is no other that deserves to be the Dauphin sire.

The Dauphin laughs and approaches Courtier 1

Dauphin: And you sir, as you indiscreetly implied to your lady friend, I am poorly dressed.

Courtier 1 hangs his head.

The Dauphin approaches Charles de Poitiers

Dauphin: And of course, I'm also financially embarrassed. Our Charles de Poitiers here is exquisitely attired. Please sit. *(Charles sits on the throne)* Enjoy the experience sire, but pray, not for too long.

Charles: I shall make the most of my elevated position sire.

Dauphin: *(to Charles)* Come now, I want you to adopt a regal demeanour.

Charles shifts and sits upright looking straight ahead.

That's good Charles, but you are human, not mummified.

Charles relaxes

Dauphin: That's much better.

Charles: But what if she acknowledges me instead of you?

Dauphin: Do you think she shall Charles?

Charles: Well, I don't know sire.

Dauphin: If she doesn't we shall observe your skills as an actor. Alternatively you may wish to apply to our Lord Chamberlain for the position of Dauphin!

There is another ripple of laughter.

Tremoille shakes his head and sighs noisily.

Captain La Hire enters urgently from the back of C aisle. The Page hurriedly enters behind him.

Page: *(hurriedly)* Captain La Hire, sire!

The Dauphin turns to them

Dauphin: Yes, yes, we know the gentleman well, perhaps too well.

The Page bows and exits

Dauphin: *(To Charles as La Hire approaches)* Act naturally, if you will.

Charles: I shall do my utmost.

La Hire: The maid is on her way, sire, accompanied by the Comte de Vendome.

Dauphin: Excellent.

La Hire: I'm pleased you are prepared to receive her, sire.

Dauphin: *(to Charles)* Relax, my friend.

Charles: I'm beginning to enjoy the experience.

Mild laughter

La Hire: Sire, I'm not sure what's happening, but it must be for a special purpose.

Dauphin: Oh, it is captain.

Tremoille: *(sharply)* Oh for heaven's sake!

La Hire: *(to Dauphin)* I believe the maid is decidedly God's messenger.

Tremoille: Another one swayed by the girl and her visions!

La Hire: *(Ignoring the remark and addressing the Dauphin)* If I may continue Sire? *(The Dauphin nods and beckons him with a wave of a hand)* When she crossed the main drawbridge with the Comte about an hour ago she heard a soldier of rough breeding swear and say that if he were given the chance by God to have his own way with her for one night she would not return in the same condition, whereupon the maid approached him and said 'You name God in your swearing outburst, but in your blasphemous remarks you deny him, and you so near to your death' The rogue was at a loss to reply and as I was making my way here I was told that within the hour he had actually fallen into a well and drowned. Sire, please treat her with respect. She's obviously an amazing young woman.

There is vocal stirring within the room. Tremoille approaches La Hire.

Tremoille: You honestly believe that that coincidental event was enough for you to regard her as amazing? Are you sure you aren't bewitched by her?

La Hire: Not at all my Lord. The incident was one of many I've heard and I truly believe the maid is a saint.

Tremoille: But did you witness any, apart from today's incident?

La Hire: But I'm sure like you I've not witnessed any acts of God, but I firmly believe in him.

Murmurs

Tremoille: How can you liken the maid to God himself? You are blinded by your belief in her!

La Hire: My Lord, if needs must I would indeed tear out my eyes for her!

Archbishop: *(Sarcastically)* Please Captain, don't even consider it. Your skills as a leader of men are badly needed.

Tremoille: The effects of an idle mind La Hire. Perhaps you and your men are in need of some action.

La Hire smiles and bows

La Hire: I await your command my Lord. My muscles are certainly flexing for it.

La Hire crosses and acknowledges Bertrand and Jean.

Dauphin: Hmm. This girl continues to intrigue me.

Immediately the Dauphin mingles and stands with the group of courtiers and noblewomen.

Tremoille crosses to the Archbishop and takes him to one side.

Tremoille: I doubt whether we shall witness a miracle today.

Archbishop: No, miracles are but few and far between.

Tremoille: What are your views on La Hire's tale about the rogue?

Archbishop: It might be an act of heresy by the maid and I must say that La Hire's comparison between the maid and God was bordering on blasphemy. However, regarding the possibility of the girl identifying the Dauphin – it will amount to another, as you say, coincidental act. She may have been given a description of him, either during her time here or on some other occasion, but we shall see. I expect no miracles.

The Page enters and calls from the back of the C aisle.

Page: His Lordship the Comte de Vendome and Joan, Maid of Domremy!

All turn to watch the approach of the Comte and Joan, except the Dauphin who hides behind one of the noblewomen. Charles adopts a regal stature on the throne. The Page remains at the exit

Tremoille: *(to Archbishop)* This should be interesting.

Joan dressed as a soldier with her hair bobbed is led by the Comte.

Madame Tremoille: *(watching the approaching Joan and talking to no one in particular)* Heaven's above, look at her!

Noblewoman 1: Is it a girl dressed as a boy?

Noblewoman 2: Or a boy, attempting to be a girl?

The Noble women stifle laughter behind their fans.

There is a ripple of laughter as Joan arrives on the stage DL, but Joan is unperturbed. She approaches Charles and the court becomes silent.

The Comte addresses la Hire out of Joan's earshot.

Comte de Vendome: What's happening la Hire? Where's the Dauphin?

La Hire holds up a hand to silence him.

Comte: (*quietly and tetchily*) I said where is the Dauphin?

La Hire: I'm not sure what is happening, but I've been assured that all will be revealed my lord.

Joan stops before Charles.

Joan: You are not the Dauphin sire, where is he?

There is a general murmur. Joan turns and seeks out the Dauphin and finding him she falls at his feet. There are gasps from the others.

Joan: Gentle Dauphin, my name is Joan, the daughter of Jacques d'Arc of Domremy. The King of Heaven has sent me to you with the message that you shall be anointed and crowned in the city of Reims, and you shall be the lieutenant of the King of Heaven, who is the King of France.

Dauphin: No, no you are mistaken child (*pointing to Charles*) There is the Dauphin.

Joan: In God's name, noble prince, it is you and none other.

The court murmurs its amazement. The Dauphin is transfixed and watches her.

Joan: I am right noble prince.

Archbishop: Why, my child, should he be crowned at Reims Cathedral?

Joan rises, turns to the Archbishop, curtseys and kisses the ring on his left hand.

Joan: Why your eminence, it is where all the Kings of France are crowned.

Archbishop: I see. Of course you are correct.

Joan: Please give me your blessing my lord Archbishop.

Archbishop: I shall pray for you my child.

Joan looks intently into his face and smiles. She remains kneeling.

Dauphin: *(smiling at Joan and turning to Charles)* Charles, it appears your acting days are over.

There is laughter from the Court.

Charles: I'm safe in the knowledge my lack of acting skills had nothing to do with your disclosure.

There is another ripple of laughter. The Dauphin crosses to Charles.

Charles makes a grand gesture to the Dauphin to take his place on the throne. The Dauphin bows awkwardly and sits.

Dauphin: I need to talk with the maid. Please take your leave, all of you, until I recall you later today.

Archbishop: *(to Tremoille, out of general earshot)* No doubt the Dauphin will become more enchanted by the young girl.

Tremoille: *(to the Archbishop)* Was that all a coincidence?

Archbishop: *(walking past him as Tremoille bows)* It was certainly not a miracle.

Tremoille: Nothing will come of it.

Archbishop: We shall see.

The others bow to the Archbishop as he exits through the centre aisle.

Tremoille: *(smiling, he turns to Madame Tremoille)* Come my dear, we must seek refreshment.

Madame Tremoille is barred from joining her husband by the kneeling Joan.

Madame Tremoille: You are in my way!

Joan: *(rising)* I beg your pardon ma'am.

Madame Tremoille: You will no longer beg after today child.

Joan: I'm from the country ma'am, but I'm not a beggar.

Madame Tremoille: It's a pity you did not stay in the country, child.

Joan: I'm meant to be here ma'am. God has commanded it.

Madame Tremoille: Huh! And no doubt you will continue your attempts to fool others with your blasphemous remarks.

Joan: Ma'am, my intention is to lead, not to fool.

Tremoille: Come my dear, you've made your point!

Madame Tremoille joins him.

Madame Tremoille: The girl's a typical country bumpkin! No decorum whatsoever!

She and Tremoille exit together through the centre aisle.

The others leave DL and through the centre aisle. Jean and Bertrand approach Joan and in turn kiss her hand. She smiles admiringly at them. They exit through the centre aisle. Comte de Vendome approaches the Dauphin.

Comte: Do you wish me to stay sire?

Dauphin: No, please you may leave, and thank you. I shall recall you later.

Comte: Of course, I'm obliged sire.

He bows

Joan: *(to the Comte)* Thank you for your kindness dear Comte.

He smiles, turns and exits through the centre aisle.

The Dauphin crosses DC and looks out after the Comte. Joan approaches him.

Dauphin: Apart from the Lord Chamberlain's wife and her husband, you appear to have won a few hearts.

Joan: I had hoped to have captured a few minds as well, sire.

The Dauphin turns to her and smiles.

Dauphin: The Comte de Vendome is one of the few I do trust. It's sad I cannot trust more of my advisers.

Joan: I trust in God, but I absolutely trust Jean de Metz and Bernard de Poulengy and, of course, I trust in you my King.

The Dauphin scoffs

Dauphin: King you say?

Joan: Soon you shall be, sire.

Dauphin: But shall I be Kingly?

Joan: You must believe you shall be.

Dauphin: I'm a sensitive man. I'm not made to give orders to kill people. I want to enjoy life and the trappings it presents to me, but I do not really want to be a king.

Joan: You must believe in yourself. Self-belief is so important. Nothing in this world has been achieved without it; that and courage.

Dauphin: Courage, what price is courage? I just want a peaceful life and sleep safely at night. Chinon offers me that. I love it here.

Joan: God has given you the absolute right to be a good King. Please let me see you sitting on the throne. I expected to see you there when I arrived.

Dauphin: Very well. *(He crosses and sits on the throne. Joan approaches him and remains standing L.)* Well?

Joan: From where I'm standing you look like a grand and worthy King.

Dauphin: Perhaps from where you are standing the light is playing tricks! Look at me, do I impress you, my clothes are old and worn. I can't afford to buy a new pair of boots!

Joan: Once you are King your whole appearance will improve.

Dauphin: *(rising and crossing DC)* I told you, I don't want to be King! I have a mother, the Queen, who doesn't consider me worthy to be a King. She calls me the bastard of the line! All she does is spend money on herself. At first it concerned me, but now I don't really care. I have advisers who do my thinking for me *(he scoffs)* but I'm not as stupid as they think.

Joan: No sire, you must believe that God will help and protect you.

Dauphin: God does not feature in this predicament!

Joan: How can you say that? God features in everything we do and you must feature in everything we do for France.

Dauphin: I owe so much money, even to the lesser courtiers around me and, God protect me, my servants! There, I seem to have contradicted myself, I sought God's protection.

Joan: I hope you meant to seek it.

Dauphin: Yes, well, how can my courtiers, my subjects have any respect for me, as their King?

Joan: By displaying the will and resolve to save France by beating the English and their allies.

Dauphin: I'd prefer to seek a treaty with them and then I could continue to live here in Chinon, in peace.

Joan: At the moment any treaty will be on English terms. No, we must be in a position whereby the English are made to seek terms. In the meantime, we must fight for France

Dauphin: Careful, you might yet convince me.

Joan crosses DL and turns to him.

Joan: Sire, if I tell you things so secret that you and God alone are privy to them, will you believe that I'm sent by God?

The Dauphin laughs briefly and then looks hard at her. Silently he beckons her to continue. He crosses DR with his back to her. Joan looks across at him. He turns to her.

Dauphin: Well?

Joan: Sire, do you remember on last All Saint's Day, being alone in the chapel of the castle at Loches, you requested three things of God?

Dauphin: *(slightly amazed)* Yes, I remember it well, but how...

Joan: *(interjecting)* Have you spoken of these things to your confessor or anyone?

Dauphin: No, I have not!

Joan: Your first request was that God should remove your courage in the matter of recovering France, if you were not the true heir, so that you should no longer be the cause of prolonging the war, which has caused pain and suffering to many.

Dauphin: How do you know this?

Joan: Your second request was you should be punished if the deaths of our people were due to your sins. The third was that the people should be forgiven if their sins were the cause of the troubles.

The Dauphin crosses to the throne, scratching his head, and sits.

Dauphin: *(he laughs)* Oh yes, I'm impressed.

He claps his hands briefly, in applause

Joan: Please don't mock me, sire!

Dauphin: No, no, I am really impressed.

The Page enters DR

Page: Sire, the guests are becoming impatient. Are you ready to receive them again? They're in the ante-room.

Dauphin: Don't bring them into the throne room. Have they been fed?

Page: Most of them have sire.

Dauphin: Give them wine and small foods. I shall have an audience with the Comte de Vendome in the first instance. Here!

Page: Yes sire.

The Page exits

Dauphin: It's in your favour that I seek counsel from those who matter.

Joan: Matter? Who are they that matter?

The Dauphin smiles

The Page enters DR

Page: The Comte de Vendome

Dauphin: *(interjecting)* Yes, I know who he is! Leave us.

Page bows and exits after the Comte enters DR

Dauphin: Dear Comte, I shall be obliged if you will accompany Joan to her quarters and ensure she is suitably cared and catered for.

Joan: But sire I thought that you were....

Dauphin: *(holding up a hand to silence her)* I must now discuss the situation finally with his eminence and others. I am sure you will be patient Joan?

Joan: If I must, my King.

Dauphin: Yes, you must.

He smiles and bows briefly, and exits DR. Joan and the Comte bow as he departs.

Joan looks after him and sighs heavily and covers her face with her hands.

Comte: Joan, rest assured the Dauphin has not dismissed you from Chinon. He's obviously treating the matter with caution, but you do appear to be in his favour. You're certainly in mine.

Joan: *(turning to him and smiling weakly)* Thank you dear Comte *(sighs heavily)* I'm so tired.

Comte: Of course you are. I'll see to it you are comfortable and that you enjoy your stay as best as you're able.

She follows the Comte through the centre aisle and just before she exits with him she turns and looks towards the throne.

Joan: May God give you the wisdom to truly trust and believe in me.

She turns and exits

The Dauphin, who holds a goblet of wine, and the Archbishop enter DR and cross to DC.

Archbishop: Well, has she enchanted you?

Dauphin: No my lord, she has amazed me!

Archbishop: You too. The same affect she's had on La Hire. What do you propose?

Dauphin: I leave that to you your eminence.

Archbishop: It is obvious you wish to take the matter further.

Dauphin: Yes, I do.

Archbishop: Then I shall arrange for her to be formally examined by the Church.

Dauphin: In the hope that she may be accepted and not branded a visionary?

Archbishop: Well that remains to be seen. I shall deal with it at once.

Dauphin: Tremoille will not be pleased and he will no doubt continue to bully me.

Archbishop: Oh, leave him to me. This has now become a matter for the Church and therefore, outside his jurisdiction.

Dauphin: Thank you your eminence.

The Dauphin drinks

Archbishop: Am I right in thinking you might accept her claims?

Dauphin: Yes your eminence, there is a good chance I might.

The actors freeze as the lights go down.

End of Scene 3

Scene 4 A reception room at Chinon Castle – a few days later

Images of a stone wall, a heavy chiffonnier decorated with heavy silver plates and drinking vessels at C, small shields and plaques are projected onto the scrim.

The stage is empty of furniture

Lights up on Joan, still dressed as a soldier, carrying a basket of flowers, crossing from DR to UL. The Dauphin and Duc d'Alencon enter DR.

Dauphin: Joan, meet my dear cousin, the Duc d'Alencon.

Joan stops and turns and crosses to them.

Joan: (*Curtseying and smiling graciously*) You are very welcome; the more that are gathered together of the royal blood of France, the better.

The Dauphin and the Duc look at each other and chuckle

Duc: It is my privilege to meet you.

Dauphin: Joan prefers not to wear the clothes of a young maid.

Duc: (*looking intently at her*) You should, you have a lovely countenance and figure.

Mockingly, Joan bobs into a curtsey and smiles demurely.

Joan: Why thank you Mon beau duc.

The Duc bows and smiles broadly.

Duc: When you arrived at Chinon I was enjoying myself at St. Florent, shooting quail. (*He crosses DL. Joan*) I heard that you'd been received here claiming to be sent by God to raise the siege of Orleans. (*He turns to her*) My curiosity was so much aroused that I had to meet you. However, I did not expect you to be dressed in this way.

Joan: What do you expect me to wear - long dresses, wigs and ride side saddle as I join the armies? Perhaps I should flutter a fan at our enemies.

The Duc laughs briefly.

Duc: What a spectacle that would be!

Tremoille enters DR

Dauphin: Ah, my Lord Chamberlain, I have business to discuss with you and I wish my cousin to be privy to it.

Tremoille: Sire, I trust your journey from St. Florent was comfortable.

Duc: As comfortable as the roads these days allow, my Lord.

Dauphin: Joan, I am sure you wish to see to the flowers before they wilt and die.

Joan: They are for the chapel sire.

Dauphin: Please join us for dinner later. My page will announce its readiness.

Duc: At dinner, I shall look forward to talking with you again.

Joan: Conversation would be welcome. It is the one thing which has been lacking these past few days.

The Dauphin looks at the Duc and smiles.

She bows and exits UL

Tremoille: The manner in which she conducts herself, one would think the girl is here on vacation.

Dauphin: Do you expect me to lock her in a cell out of sight, my Lord?

Tremoille: In terms of her dialogue, I do not expect such familiarity from one so young and from someone in her position in life.

Duc: Heavens blessed, I am certain she has no desire to be familiar in any shape or form.

Dauphin: If that were the case she would be shown the door or better still, whipped.

The Dauphin and Duc chuckle

Tremoille: Forgive me gentlemen, but I fail to appreciate your mirth.

Duc: What's the current situation regarding the maid?

Dauphin: She has submitted to a formal examination.

Duc: You mean an inquisition.

Dauphin: Hardly, cousin.

Duke: Ecclesiastically or secularly?

Dauphin: I have asked the Archbishop of Reims to conduct it.

Duc: Long live the Church!

Dauphin: Your cynicism is wearing thin. It's my duty to ensure the girl is not a visionary or heretic.

Tremoille: We only seek the truth.

Duc: Have you not been given it my Lord?

Tremoille: (*feigning innocence*) I'm not sure of your meaning.

Duc: (*smiling broadly and moving DL*) Why, from the maid herself.

Tremoille: As the Dauphin has stated, one has to be very careful.

Duc: Have you not considered the mood of the common people? They appear to be in support of her, even to the point of adulation.

Tremoille: That could be dangerous.

Duc: I appreciate your fears Lord Chamberlain, but no war is won on hesitation. You cannot ignore the fact that soon your comfortable life here in Chinon could be destroyed.

Tremoille: (*tetchily*) I'm not sure how I should treat your comment, sir!

Duc: The way things are we about to lose Orleans. The Loire valley will be under English rule and soon the whole of France.

Tremoille: The English appear to have lost their appetite for more conflict in Orleans. Nothing of any consequence has happened for weeks. My informants have told me their men want to return home. They've had enough. In that case there could be room for a truce or a treaty.

Duc: At a price my lord, at a price! In any case, if their men return home others will soon replace them.

Dauphin: I want to bring you up to date with the Archbishop's intentions concerning Joan. She's inclined to be very outspoken, even hot headed, and this enquiry is bound to be protracted, which will heighten her response. She has little company of her own age and

since cousin, you are known for your calming influence I'd ask you to befriend and advise her.

Duc: Of course, I shall look forward to it.

Tremoille: Do we need to be that concerned about the girl's welfare? I detest the thought of taking care not to tread on eggshells.

Dauphin: Knowing the messiness of my cooks, my Lord, I'm surprised you haven't done so already.

The Duc and Dauphin laugh briefly. Tremoille slowly shakes his head.

Duc: It's clear his Lordship would indeed imprison her!

Tremoille: *(carefully and firmly)* If I had my way, I would and I'd throw away the key.

The actors freeze as the lights go down slowly

End of Scene 4

Scene 5 - A Reception Room in Chinon Castle - 2 hours later.

A stone wall and a tapestry are projected on the scrim from the front.

There is a table and chairs at C which is at an angle towards DR. There is a chair LC angled towards DR

There is no other furniture on stage.

Enter Duc and Joan UR. They cross to DC

Duc: You must be careful what you say in his presence. Our Lord Chamberlain places himself above others and also his wife, which in her case I suppose is completely understandable *(he chuckles)*

Joan does not share the humour.

Joan: I'm pleased he's not in charge of the investigation.

Duc: He's supposed to be the Minister in charge of the armies, but he does nothing, apart from chastising our defeated generals and looking after his own nest. Sadly, my cousin is forced to be most wary of him and the debt he owes him is a yoke around his neck.

Joan: I'm glad you're here, Mon beau duc. I hope you don't mind my addressing you as such.

Duc: I find it delightful.

Joan: I've heard so much about you.

The Duc smiles and takes her hands

Duc: I'm sure you've heard that I'm considered the penniless duke. I rely on my dear wife's estate which has dwindled since she paid the the ransom for my release from the English.

Joan: Were you badly treated by the English?

Duc: I was treated well enough under the circumstances, but I would've been executed had the ransom not been paid.

Joan: Isn't your wife the daughter of the Duke of Orleans?

Duc: Yes, he's in England; a prisoner.

Joan: Yes, I know.

Duc: Have you met him?

Joan: No, but I hold him high in my affections. He's a wonderful poet and I know that God loves him. If I could I'd cross the channel and bring him home to France.

Duc: *(looking into her eyes)* Yes, I believe you would.

Joan breaks away and crosses DL

Joan: Could we go horse riding tomorrow, after Mass?

Duc: Yes, why not. I'll teach you how to tilt. And soon I shall take you home and introduce you to my dear wife. You'll like her.

Joan: Yes, I'd love that.

The Dauphin enters DR

Dauphin: He's gone, thank the heavens. I don't think that man has a soul.

Joan: A soul is one thing we all have, good or bad, friend or foe.

Dauphin: Yes, yes. You must be careful what you say Joan. Some of the things you mentioned at dinner will be communicated to the Archbishop. Tremoille is close enough to him, even though they do not at times, see eye to eye.

Joan: We shall attend Mass tomorrow.

Duc: Yes, that's important.

Dauphin: I shall bear my soul to my maker.

Joan crosses UL and turns

Joan: Shall I see the Archbishop tomorrow?

Dauphin: The matter is out of my hands Joan. As I said you must be patient.

Joan: But all this waiting is too much! Far too much!

She exits belligerently

The Duc looks after her and turns to the Dauphin.

Duc: You must hasten this examination. I'm utterly convinced her presence in Orleans is vital.

Dauphin: Do you believe, as others do that she could lead our armies into battle?

Duc: No, but her presence would be enough.

Dauphin: Has she horse riding skills?

Duc: She rode a horse to meet you here, didn't she?

